United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1123
20 April 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council President urges all parties in Afghanistan to "display restraint" and to support United Nations efforts to end crisis; Secretary-General's Personal Representative is continuing efforts "to push forward a political solution under the new evolving circumstances".

+ In Phnom Penh over the weekend, Secretary-General meets with Prince Norodom Sihanouk and appeals to international community for $593 million to finance economic reconstruction of Cambodia; arrives today in Bangkok to begin two-day official visit to Thailand.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations meets delegation of FMLN to discuss implementation of peace agreement in El Salvador.

+ Secretary-General's Personal Envoy to Yugoslavia returns to New York following mission to Yugoslavia and meetings in Lisbon with Portuguese Foreign Minister.

+ Executive Director of International Atomic Energy Agency reports to Security Council that Agency "will be precluded from carrying out monitoring and verification of scope and nature approved by the Council until Iraq provides it with full and complete details of its nuclear programme".

+ Committee on Information ends its fourteenth session in New York, approving report to General Assembly and draft texts on United Nations public information policies and activities.

+ Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to begin first session in Vienna tomorrow, 21 April.

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The Security Council has urged all concerned in the Afghan conflict to "display restraint" and support the efforts of the Secretary-General's

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Personal Representative, Benon Sevan, "towards a political solution" to the crisis, saying there was "no viable alternative".

The Security Council made the appeal in a statement read out by Council President Simbarashe S. Mumbengegwi of Zimbabwe on Thursday night, 16 April.

The Council President said a political solution had been proposed by the Secretary-General with the objective of bringing and end to bloodshed and violence, promoting national reconciliation, and safeguarding the unity and territorial integrity of Afghanistan. Failure to do so could only perpetuate the suffering of the Afghan people. The Council urged all parties in Afghanistan to assure the safety of all, especially United Nations personnel, and their complete freedom of movement, the safety of the personnel of diplomatic missions, as well as the safe departure of those who had chosen to leave.

Also on Thursday, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali deplored the outbreak of fighting in Afghanistan and expressed the hope that the safety of all United Nations personnel would be respected.

The fighting in Afghanistan began in the wake of an agreement reached "in principle" last week with the Afghan parties and Governments involved to establish a pre-transitional council in Afghanistan composed of impartial personalities to which all powers and all executive authority would be transferred.

Announcing the agreement in Geneva on Friday, 10 April, the Secretary-General said an Afghan gathering would be organized as early as possible to work out arrangements for the transition period leading to the establishment of a Government in Kabul through free and fair elections.

Meanwhile, spokeswoman Nadia Younes told correspondents today that the Secretary-General's Personal Representative on Afghanistan, Benon Sevan, had been continuing his effort towards a solution to the Afghan crisis.

She said Mr. Sevan had been in touch with the United Nations throughout the weekend and had made "continuous attempts to push forward a political solution under the new evolving circumstances and to avoid a military confrontation in Kabul".

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Continuing his three-week visit to Europe and Asia, the Secretary-General arrived today in Bangkok from Phnom Penh to begin a two-day official visit to Thailand, according to a United Nations spokeswoman.

Tomorrow, 21 April, the Secretary-General would call on the Thai interim Prime Minister, Anand Panyarachun, with whom he would hold consultations. Following a luncheon in his honour, Mr. Boutros-Ghali would visit the headquarters of Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to address the staff. He would be received in audience by the King and Queen of Thailand. He would then leave for New Delhi to begin an official two-day visit to India.

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In Cambodia over the weekend, the Secretary-General inspected the operation of the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). On Saturday, 18 April, he had a meeting with Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the President of the Supreme National Council -- the sole legitimate authority in Cambodia.

This morning, Mr. Boutros-Ghali held a press conference in the presence of Prince Sihanouk, launching an appeal to the international donor community for $593 million in voluntary contributions to finance the economic reconstruction of Cambodia.

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A United Nations spokeswoman announced today that Marrack Goulding, Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations, would chair a meeting this morning with a delegation of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN).

Requested by the FMLN, the meeting would take stock of the implementation of the peace agreement in El Salvador. Further meetings were planned with Mr. Goulding, probably this afternoon and tomorrow. The FMLN delegation would leave New York on Wednesday, 22 April.

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The Secretary-General's Personal Envoy to Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance, returned to New York Saturday night from Lisbon, where he had met with the Portuguese Foreign Minister, following Mr. Vance's visit to Yugoslavia, a United Nations spokeswoman said today.

Mr. Vance was now preparing his report to the Secretary-General on his mission to Yugoslavia.

In reply to questions about press reports over the weekend about "armed groups in Bosnia disguised as United Nations troops", the spokeswoman confirmed that there had been incidents on both sides, with "unnamed parties using blue berets, blue helmets and white vehicles with United Nations markings". Even though there were only three or four incidents, she said the situation as "dangerous and irresponsible". The United Nations had protested these incidents locally.

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The Executive Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Hans Blix, has said that "until such time as Iraq provides the Agency with full and complete details of its nuclear programme", as required by resolution 715 (1991), the IAEA will be "precluded from establishing a firm basis for carrying out effectively monitoring and verification of the scope and nature approved by the Security Council".

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Mr. Blix's conclusions were contained in the Agency's first six-month report to the Secretary-General on the implementation of the its plan for future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with the relevant resolutions.

The report pointed out that in his address to the Council on 11 March, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz had asserted Iraq's willingness to comply with resolution 687 (1991) and to reach a practical solution to the question of the Council verification of Iraq's capabilities to produce weapons prohibited by the resolution. Mr. Aziz had also stated that further negotiation and modification of the two plans approved under resolution 715 were necessary.

Mr. Blix further reported that the eleventh IAEA inspection team, which visited Iraq from 7 to 15 April, had intended to make it clear to the Iraqi side that the IAEA would "not negotiate modifications to the terms of the plans approved by the Security Council pursuant to resolution 715".

The Security Council is scheduled to take up the report tomorrow during consultations, along with a report of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament also dealing with Iraq's compliance with resolution 687.

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The General Assembly would call on the Secretary-General to study ways of redressing differences in the allocation of resources and support in the financing of United Nations information centres, according to recommendations approved on Thursday, 16 April, by the Committee on Information, as it concluded its 1992 session.

The recommendations are contained in the Committee's annual report to the Assembly, which was approved without a vote, as orally revised. The text would also have the Secretary-General submit to the Committee at its next session a comprehensive report on his plan to integrate United Nations information centres with other United Nations offices, while maintaining the centres' functional autonomy.

By other provisions of the text on United Nations public information policies, the Assembly would request that the Secretary-General complete arrangements for an information component in Warsaw; have the Department of Public Information provide professionals and equipment, where necessary, to reactivate the centre at Tehran and to enhance the centres at Dar es Salaam,
Dhaka and Bujumbura; consider approving the establishment of a centre at Sana'a; and encourage enhanced cooperation between the Department and the University for Peace in Costa Rica.

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Transnational crime, organized crime, penal sanctions and money laundering, including confiscation of the proceeds of crime, are among the topics to be discussed by the first session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, beginning tomorrow in Vienna.

The newly established 40-member Commission replaces the now defunct Committee on Crime Prevention and Control as the major functional United Nations body dealing with crime control issues. It provides policy guidance in crime prevention and criminal justice and will develop, monitor and review the United Nations programme on crime prevention and mobilize support for it on the part of Member States. Another function of the new Commission will be to make preparations for United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders which are held every five years. Eight have been held so far and have produced important instruments, guidelines and standards on various crime prevention and criminal justice issues.

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